

# GHANA FACING TIGHTER RULE

## Nkrumah Moves to Strengthen His Personal Control of Nation

By LLOYD GARRISON

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LAGOS, Nigeria, Feb. 8—Spark, the Ghanaian Government-sponsored weekly at Accra, said a few weeks ago, "In essence, a state of war exists in Ghana society."

Events since then have proved Spark unerringly accurate. The war is being waged on two fronts. At home, it is an openly declared class war to eliminate "counterrevolutionaries" and "reactionary bourgeois."

Abroad, it is a propaganda war aimed at discrediting the United States and linking Ghana's internal ills with American "imperialists" and their Ghanaian "lackeys."

This week, America's main crime was "rumor mongering." To make sure the Americans got the point, the Government's Convention People's party dispatched several hundred young militants to the embassy in Accra for a demonstration. Egged on by a party loudspeaker van, the crowd chanted, "Americans go home." Placards proclaimed: "No more lies" and "Down with your vicious rumors."

### Swelling Mob

The mob swelled and finally spilled over onto the embassy grounds. Howard V. Funk, an economic attaché, had his camera snatched from his hands by a demonstrator who swiftly melted back into the crowd. Only the daring of Emerson Player, a young Negro political officer from Colorado, saved the American flag from destruction. It was Mr. Player who bolted into the crowd, grabbed the halyard and hoisted the colors back up the pole just as they were about to be torn away.

Washington protested and put the blame squarely on the Government of President Kwame Nkrumah. In Accra, Ambassador William F. Mahoney sought an urgent meeting with Mr. Nkrumah to protest the incident. When the President replied that he would see Mr. Mahoney any time—but not about the demonstration—Mr. Mahoney was immediately called home for "urgent consultations."

Why charge the embassy with "rumor mongering?" The answer has its roots in the fact that Ghana's press and radio is entirely Government-controlled. The accent is on propaganda with very little news—and that only news that reflects favorably on the Nkrumah Government.

### Never Stamped Out

The result is that rumors about "what's really going on" fan through Accra like brush fires. They are never quite stamped out and the size of each little fire tends to expand with each retelling.

Before finishing breakfast one morning this week, a reporter picked up the following without even trying:

"Nkrumah shot one of his soldiers last night in the castle," said the waiter serving coffee.

A Ghanaian contact called to say a friend of a friend reported that "the army may mutiny any time." Then another reporter telephoned from a hotel wondering if there was anything to the story that so and so, a Ghanaian judge, was under house arrest. And so on.

The rumors all have one thing in common: They mirror a mixture of fear, unrest and confusion over the Government's headlong drive to establish a one-party Socialist state based on what the party press calls "Marxist-Nkrumahism."

The more the rumors, the more the sense of insecurity and the more the Government worries. On Monday, loudspeaker trucks toured the city trying to scotch the more obvious rumors. But this did little good, for not a few Ghanaians have long since ceased to take the Government at its word.

Presumably, the Government felt it could not blame its own people for spawning the stories. Hence, the pointed finger at that old familiar bugaboo—the foreign imperialist, and in this case, the American imperialist.

### Summing Up

The vitriol being spewed into newspapers is perhaps best summed up by the kind of things the editor of The Ghanaian Times had to say when he manned the loudspeaker at the embassy demonstration.

"We shall massacre you," he cried, "just as you have massacred the people of Vietnam, Panama, Cuba, Korea and Germany!"

No one, least of all American diplomats in West Africa, are sure of what prompted Mr. Nkrumah's anti-American campaign. But two points seem clear. First, that the propaganda campaign will continue and intensify. Second, that Mr. Nkrumah is in earnest about transforming Ghana into a Marxist society. In effect, the two points are inseparable.

The first hint of what was to come was a speech by Mr. Nkrumah last November to a group of African journalists. For the first time, he introduced the idea of the class struggle. He also denounced the West in scathing terms and in a tone of voice many observers described as bordering on hysteria.

### Dismissal of Judges

Then, in December, came his angry dismissal of Sir Arku Korsah, Ghana's Chief Justice, who along with two other judges acquitted three ranking officials the Government had accused of treason.

There followed a New Year's Eve speech in which Mr. Nkrumah called for a nationwide referendum making Ghana a one-party, Socialist state and giving him power to dismiss judges at will.

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